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Reviews

The African State at a Critical Juncture: between disintegration and reconfiguration edited by LEONARDO A. VILLALON and PHILIP A. HUXTABLE
Boulder, CO and London: Lynne Rienner, 1998. Pp. ix + 334. £43.95, £17.50 (pbk.).

This collection of edited conference papers derives from an International Studies Association meeting held in the USA in 1995, and contains ten chapters on individual countries (Somalia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Zaire, Senegal, Kenya, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Uganda and Zimbabwe) together with the editors' introduction and conclusions and three comparative/theoretical pieces by Shaw and Nyang'oro, Forrest and Boone. The focus on the collapse and reconfiguration of African states in the 1990s is timely and most of the country case studies are usefully up to date. The comparative framework is, unusually for volumes of this sort, relevant and quite well sustained by the case study authors. The general approach is neo-Huntingtonian, the editors arguing that the dominant concern in the 1990s literature with 'democratisation' and 'good governance' has an air of unreality about it which fails to illuminate or explain the differences in political outcomes amongst African states as widely varied as Somalia on the one hand and Ghana on the other. These differences cannot adequately be described in terms of degrees of democratisation, but should rather be interpreted as functions of different capacities and different (path-dependent) responses to the problems of order, institution-building and how to sustain or reconfigure revenue extraction from the economies upon which these states depend.

The case studies are divided into two groups: those in Part II deal with 'state disintegration' and those in Part III with 'state reconfiguration'. Each part begins with a discussion of the theoretical implications of the work by two contributors, and both Boone and Forrest have some interesting things to say. Forrest argues that state collapse does not necessarily mean anarchy, reminding us of older debates in the historical and anthropological literature about the forms of political authority developed in African acephalous societies, and suggesting that reconfigurations of a more decentralised and localised kind might be preferable to the violence and repression caused, not by the disintegration of the state as such but by the abuse of state power. He is supported to some extent by Reno's well-informed analysis of Sierra Leone, in which he sees 'new and differents forms of sustainable political organisation developing'. Although they could be criticised for straining too hard to find a positive angle on what has happened (is living under the dubious protection of local warlords, diamond smugglers or youth militias, or exposed to constant raids by religious sects and 'social bandits' really preferable to the bureaucratic state, however corrupt?) one could hardly disagree with Longman's blunt comment on Rwanda: 'The record of the independent African state has been

abominable.' Anna Simons' piece on Somalia is also well grounded and thought provoking, in so far as she says what many have privately thought – that Somalia probably cannot be a state in the conventional sense, although Somalis might well find ways of living together as neighbours. (One is tempted to add that it would be better for all if some other states, e.g. Sudan, recognised that there is little to be gained by attempting to prolong their existence within their colonially inherited borders.) In fact, Clark's view of Zaire is a useful counter-balance to the rather sanguine perspectives on state collapse adopted by the other authors; he spells out in uncompromising terms the dire economic and social consequences for ordinary people of the long and agonising disintegration of the Zairean state.

Boone's introduction to Part III poses clearly the central comparative question: why is it that some African states have remained intact and become sufficiently institutionalised to reconfigure themselves during the 'critical juncture' of the 1990s, whilst others have disintegrated? She suggests that the answer lies mainly in the different character of state–society relations developed in countries based mainly on peasant export agriculture, in which the state was forced to build a more organic relationship with its own society and economy, in order successfully to maintain its extractions. She also sees the economic reforms imposed by Structural Adjustment Programmes as having helped to revive and consolidate the power of well-entrenched political elites (Senegal, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire being the main examples). Perhaps because of the different focus, the case studies in this section of the book are less stimulating than those on the 'disintegrating' states; the pieces on Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire are useful surveys, although one might question Green's rather optimistic view that the Rawlings' regime managed to transform the Ghanaian state into one based on 'performance legitimacy' and withdrawal from clientelistic involvement in economic accumulation. Woods argues that President Bédié has managed to reconfigure the Ivorian state along more liberal lines, with less social cooptation than in the traditional Houphouet system, but perhaps overstates the popular significance of the teachers' and students' opposition to the regime. As in Houphouet-Boigny's time, the current PDCI regime has managed to either incorporate or marginalise these very privileged groups without too much difficulty in the late 1990s. The most dangerous challenge to the PDCI elite came in fact from the mobilisation of northern Muslims by the new RDR opposition in the 1995 elections. Kassimir's piece presents some new and interesting material on the Catholic Church in Museveni's Uganda. Part III also contains chapters by Ranchod-Nilsson and Maria Nzomo on women's movements in Zimbabwe and Kenya, but these are the only two in the book which do not seem to fit very well with its main theme, and one wonders why they were included.

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Warlord Politics and African States by WILLIAM RENO
Boulder, CO and London: Lynne Rienner, 1998. Pp. 249, £39.95.

This is an important as well as a fascinating book. Reno is centrally concerned with the ways in which politicians come to exercise power in the crumbling wreckage of African states revealed by economic collapse and the end of the Cold War. He finds the answer in the shift from a conventional idea of politics as the mobilisation of citizens into the state, to political action as the control of economic networks. Drawing on his previous work, especially on Sierra Leone and Liberia, he extends this into a broader analysis, which includes case study chapters not only on these states, but also on Congo/Zaire and Nigeria.

Such states operate through a distinctive political logic, which depends on identifying potential sources of funds, imposing control over these by whatever means are available (usually violent ones), and then using the resources thus generated in order to cut deals with other autonomous actors, while seeking to defend one's own commercial networks and capture those of others. It is a conception utterly at variance with any idea of politics as the pursuit of public goods: territories are divided into 'useful' (i.e. profitable) and 'useless' zones; individuals are exploited, massacred or driven out; effective state bureaucracies are treated as a threat (since they use up money and acquire interests of their own); and services such as health and education are redundant. State frontiers become irrelevant, since the demands of commerce necessarily subvert them, and 'sovereignty' is useful only as a means for recruiting allies such as foreign states and international institutions for which it provides essential cover through formal rules of international action; for some political entrepreneurs, such as Charles Taylor in his conflict with the Doe and IGNU regimes in Monrovia, *not* being a recognised sovereign state may be an advantage. Accountability to local societies is subverted through deals with international entrepreneurs (who can be relied on to turn up wherever the pickings are available), backed by their own private military forces such as the South African Executive Outcomes and its even less salubrious competitors.

Reno pursues this gruesome analysis through a remarkable nose for the underside of African political life, drawing on both personal fieldwork and an eclectic collection of often obscure published sources. His central focus is on the dilemmas faced by African political entrepreneurs themselves in the radically changed scenarios revealed by the end of the Cold War, and the deals in which they engage. While in a broad sense these reveal Africa's dependence on outside force and money, however, they also illustrate the autonomy with which these entrepreneurs (or warlords) are able to manipulate foreign as well as domestic actors. He is especially acute on the ambivalence of the 'reform' programmes imposed by international agencies, and the opportunities which these provide. He also has a sharp eye for the role of 'humanitarian' actors, such as American evangelist Pat Robertson's role in Mobutu's Zaire, with an 'Operation Blessing' that also extended to gold, diamond and logging operations. Mobutu's former intelligence head, Honoré 'the Terminator' Ngbanda, appeared on television giving Christian sermons. Nigeria is not placed on the same level as the other three cases, since Reno identifies elements

both of a working bureaucracy, and of a 'public' politics geared to the pursuit of popular support through programmes of communal betterment by state institutions; but he none the less provides remarkable details of enrichment by military-commercial factions, through such mechanisms as banking fraud, narcotics and the diversion of oil revenues, and suggests that many of the requirements for a warlord scenario are present.

Though the concluding chapter is disappointingly short and hurried, passing up the opportunity to place warlord politics within a broader conceptualisation of African state formation and decay, the analysis as a whole is appallingly convincing. It could, moreover, have been strengthened by an awareness, generally missing from the book, of the close historical parallels between the phenomena observed here and patterns of state formation which predated colonial rule, and which derived from exactly the kind of control over commercial networks – in slaves, gold or ivory – which Reno identifies. There is room, too, for a more extended analysis of the relationship between territoriality and political authority, since pre-colonial trading states were likewise unconcerned with frontiers and citizenship, seeking instead to extend their control as far into their commercial peripheries as they were able. In short, Reno's analysis could plausibly be taken as a starting point for the hypothesis that warlordism represents the displacement of the kind of bureaucratic-authoritarian territorial state imposed by colonial rule, in favour of forms of political management more deeply rooted both in Africa's past, and in its peculiar relationship to the global economy. The question arises, finally, of whether so destructive a logic of political and commercial exploitation is actually sustainable over more than a relatively short period, or whether some more viable (and morally defensible) form of political authority must eventually displace it. This book can scarcely be expected to tackle such speculations; but it is greatly to its credit that, in addition to providing rivetting accounts of the skullduggery that passes for politics in at least parts of the continent, it places these within a frame of reference which encourages much wider reflection on the African condition.

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Democratization in Africa: the theory and dynamics of political transitions by EARL CONTEH-MORGAN
Westport, CT and London: Praeger Publishers, 1997. £43.95.

Professor Conteh-Morgan has provided us with a very broad survey of contemporary African politics. The focus is nominally on the recent wave of democratisation, and the author opens the book by identifying this objective as focusing on the 'factors underlying the dilemmas, anomalies, paradoxes, complexities, failures, and successes in the democratization process, and to combine these factors into a theory of Third World democratization' (p. 3). In fact, the theme of democratisation is often little more than a pretext for a wide-ranging discussion of such topics as ethnicity, the role of the military and Africa's incorporation in the world economy. There is in fact very little

analysis of political protests, first elections, political parties, national conferences and all the other phenomena on which the democratisation literature has typically focused its attention.

The methodological and theoretical inspiration behind this broad agenda is eclectic. The book opens with a structuralist profession of faith. Democratisation in Africa must be understood in the context of the region's dependence on the powerful economies of the West. Indeed, 'All modern fundamental changes in developing countries, in fact, must be viewed as by-products of the unevenly interlocked structure of power and wealth between advanced technological countries and poor, developing countries' (p. 16). That structural forces predetermine outcomes is asserted repeatedly throughout the book. It leads the author to argue several times that ongoing democratisation efforts are epiphenomenal and that in fact few meaningful changes have occurred. Oddly, the author often seems to abandon this structuralist determinism to examine such contingent and institutional factors as ethnic conflict, military–civilian relations and intra-elite deal-making around the time of the transition. The chapters describing these factors have much compelling analysis, although they would have been strengthened by richer empirical material and many readers may yearn for more differentiation across the African cases. Unfortunately, Professor Conteh-Morgan sometimes seems to undermine his own positions in ending sections by suggesting that his structuralist framework incorporates these institutional and contingent factors. Perhaps, but when structural relationships are argued to explain everything, they quickly explain very little that is useful.

Professor Conteh-Morgan also explicitly favours an international explanation for the current wave of democratisation. He thus asserts several times that the proximate cause of the wave of democratisation which hit Africa in the late 1980s was the end of the Cold War, although he never elaborates in any detail on the causal mechanisms involved. Indeed, while he explicitly favors international explanations for democratisation outcomes, the book actually has relatively little to say about international diplomacy or the policies of Western governments *vis-à-vis* Africa. When it finally gets around to examining external factors in the next to last chapter, the focus is on the IMF and the World Bank's economic reform programmes, rather than on factors relating to the Cold War's demise. The chapter (pp. 143–62) argues that the social inequality that necessarily results from structural adjustment programmes helps to weaken and destabilise government and the Western donors promote a superficial kind of democratisation, based on multiparty elections and parliaments, to disguise this fact.

The book ends with a conclusion which advances five basic assumptions about the political reform process. Each lead the author back to the conclusion that democratisation may well be premature in much of Africa given current conditions. Many will no doubt agree with this conclusion even if they do not agree with the path this book took to reach them.

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The Modernity of Witchcraft: politics and the occult in postcolonial Africa by PETER GESCHIERE
Charlottesville, VA and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997. Pp. xii + 311. £16.50 (pbk.).

The is a very good book which will be appreciated by several audiences. First, it will appeal to those who are keen on anthropological monographs, as the major part of the book is set in the cultural universe of the Maka in Eastern Cameron. Central in this universe is a contradiction between an egalitarian ideology on the one hand, and a high value placed on individual achievement on the other. The latter is expressed not only in terms of wealth and power, but also in terms of elements that are much more difficult to grasp, especially the prestige gained in big village palavers. This is not merely a book on the Maka however, because it contains many comparative references, mostly to other societies in Cameroon. It is therefore also of interest to those who are interested in relations between state and society in that country. The book has in the first place, however, a theoretical thrust: the occult is not just limited to those spheres which are labelled as traditional but also pervades the sectors in society which are called modern. The title may suggest that only the state and politics are taken into consideration, but the market and entrepreneurship receive much attention as well. Witchcraft, in Geschiere's view, is typically open ended and diffuse. Occult forces – which are mostly labelled as witchcraft and sorcery – defy categorisation and change in nature over time and place. The occult may be best described as an amoral force which necessarily belongs to power and prestige as well as being an important leveller. His last substantive chapter (chapter 6), 'The State Attacks', is the most open-ended of all the chapters. It describes how the state has recently begun to recognise witchcraft in legal arenas. Geschiere concludes, however, that: 'There are good reasons, then, to doubt that the judiciary apparatus, and the state in general are equipped to intervene in the dangerous terrain of witchcraft' (p. 197).

Many Africans and Africanists will experience a shock of recognition while reading this book, and I read it with more involvement than usual. The reason is that I myself was forcefully confronted with the pervading power of these beliefs during my stay in Malawi, especially during fieldwork in local legal arenas. I had tended to consider such beliefs as common, but as no more than an adjunct to social life: some people have women or drink as a weakness, while others need to consult the 'doctors' often. That position became untenable, however, and it became imperative to give these forces meaning in structuring social behaviour. This background of mine gave rise to certain queries as I was reading the book. The first one deals with the content of the beliefs. In my experience they are closely linked to what may be called the life force: disease, death, fertility and sex. The first two elements receive much attention in this book, but the latter two – fertility and sex – play a rather minor role and, when they do crop up, they may merit more importance than they have in fact been given. For example: 'It seems the court takes such threats to virility more seriously than homicide' (p. 172). This last quote is taken from the intriguing chapter on witchcraft in state legal arenas which

gives rise to another query. Geschiere doubts involvement with witchcraft as part of a totalising hegemonic project of the state in disciplining local societies. I agree with him that it is more likely that the state is dragged into these issues by forces from below, but there is a hegemonic belief system at work. This is particularly clear when he writes about the links with kinship: witchcraft 'expresses the frightening realization that aggression threatens from within the intimacy of the family – that is from the very space where complete solidarity and trust should reign without fail'. Unity and consensus are dominant values in kinship as well as in political ideologies in Africa. In this perspective, it is logical to turn on the anti-social element which is blamed when this social order – which is felt to be natural – does not emerge. That also explains the parallels with MacCarthyism and Stalinist show trials, as those historical events also took place against the background of a belief in a natural social order: the free market and the communist state, respectively. These beliefs in consensus and unity as a normal state of affairs are the equivalent in local knowledge of the structural functionist belief in a natural tendency to order. I therefore think that, using structural functionalist analysis, more sensible things can be found out about witchcraft than Geschiere believes.

The above-mentioned analogies with MacCarthyism and Stalinism are taken from Mayer's inaugural lecture at Rhodes University. That lecture is briefly mentioned in a note on p. 279, but my understanding of Mayer differs from that of Geschiere. Mayer describes in the first place how a belief in natural order is held in societies which he has studied, rather than unreservedly positing it as such in his own (Mayer's) beliefs. This is one of several instances where I appreciated the general literature on witchcraft differently, and it may be because of my background that this was especially the case in literature on Southern and Central Africa. I think, for example, that it distorts the argument to talk about 'Isaac Niehaus's seminal analysis of witch hunts in Northern Transvaal as part of the struggle against apartheid' (p. 223). The witch hunts were associated with the ANC, but the point made by Niehause is that these could not be reduced to any teleological interpretation such as political struggle: the latter interpretation would fit in more with Geschiere's analysis. He writes incisively about these discourses and 'their hold over people's minds' (p. xi), and that starting point, rather than an imputed goal-directed rationality, informs this superb book.

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Regionalism and Africa's Development: expectations, reality and challenges by S. K. B. ASANTE
London: Macmillan Press, 1997. Pp. 206. £40.00.

The objective of the author in this book is to discuss regionalism in a manner accessible to an audience encompassing students, scholars, politicians and other professionals, in public or private sectors, who grapple with issues of African integration and development in the course of their work. The book is

divided into two main parts. Part I, chapters 2 to 4, entitled 'Regionalism in Africa: The First Phase', provides a panoramic assessment of the record of economic cooperation in Africa before the resurgence of regionalism in international economic relations in the 1990s. The assessment draws mainly from the experiences of four out of eighteen identified 'African Economic Integration and Co-operation Groupings'. These are the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA), the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The assessment confirms the findings of many other studies on regional integration in Africa. Most of the schemes failed to realise articulated goals and objectives, especially those relating to trade liberalisation, monetary and financial cooperation, and general market integration. African schemes failed to influence trade patterns between Africa and the rest of the world, or to stimulate intraregional trade in Africa.

The factors identified in the assessment as contributing to the poor record of regionalism and integration on the African continent include lack of political will on the part of African governments and rulers, lack of appropriate institutional mechanisms for the coordination and implementation of integration schemes, inadequate and inappropriate staffing arrangements, and lack of financial resources. Over and above these and many other factors, the assessment identifies the emphasis on trade liberalisation and market integration as a 'design fault' in most of the arrangements. This was like putting the proverbial cart before the horse. Countries that have little to trade should not be expected to be enthusiastic about trade liberalisation. The central argument or thesis of this book is that African integration schemes should have been, and must be, oriented towards development of the capacity to produce and to trade before trade liberalisation and market integration. There is no suggestion that given Africa's past record, regionalism might be a flawed strategy for securing the development of the continent. On the contrary, the book affirms the familiar argument that regionalism must be the only viable strategy, given the fragmented and fractured nature of African states and their economies.

Part II, chapters 5 to 8, entitled 'Into the 1990s: The New Phase of Regionalism in Africa', begins with a review of aspects of the Treaty for the Establishment of the African Economic Community (AEC), adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) at Abuja, Nigeria, on 3 June 1991. This is highlighted as offering a better model and strategy, on the basis of which important regional arrangements like ECOWAS, SADCC and the PTA have been revised and relaunched. The AEC Treaty proposes a more enveloping form of cooperation or integration, embracing economic and non-economic issues, and the various other elements that can be considered as laying the foundations for development of intra-African trade and ultimate trade liberalisation and market integration. The Treaty also espouses 'pan-African integration', founded upon the strengthening, coordination, harmonisation and subsequent merger of revised and relaunched regional communities. The discussion also identifies some of the internal and external challenges that are likely to confound or complicate the implementation and realisation of the

objectives of the Treaty. The capacity and ability of the OAU, the main implementing agency, to carry out the tasks envisaged in the long-drawn out process of pan-African integration is one major concern. Among the external challenges, the discussion is concerned with some of the 'vertical integration' or trade cooperation arrangements between North and South seen as inimical to South–South trade, such as the Lome aid/trade arrangements, and the Cross Border Initiative for Trade and Investment in Eastern and Southern Africa.

The last two chapters of the book present prescriptions, recommendations and conclusions on the new direction of regionalism and integration in Africa charted under instruments like the AEC Treaty. Some of the novel recommendations relate to strengthening the capacity and resolve of African countries to carry out integration programmes. They include incorporation of integration programmes in national development plans and strategies, and greater involvement and participation of the private sector, enterprises and other non-governmental social and economic operators in integration processes. Other novel recommendations relate the external challenges to African integration, including linking of structural adjustment programmes with integration efforts; targeting regional integration efforts by donors; and the encouragement of South–South cooperation in international economic relations.

This book achieves its objectives of presenting its subject matter in a manner comprehensible even to those with little or no grounding in trade and integration theories. Scholars and non-scholars will find it an essential addition to the ever-growing stock of materials on regionalism in Africa. But the appeal of the book to a wider audience could also be its main weakness for those interested in scholarly treatment of some of the issues. From the perspective of international trade law and regional integration, the review of the AEC Treaty in chapter 5 is hurried, perfunctory and too uncritical. The discussion, for example, glosses over some of the main weaknesses of the programme laid out for the evolution of an African Community by the year 2028. This programme is too futuristic and surreal. It can easily be overtaken by political and economic developments on the continent. It is also notable to a discerning reader that regional trade liberalisation is emphasised during the first few attainable stages of the programme. The programme itself clearly emulates the on-going process of European integration. The African process is also expected to progress from trade liberalisation, the formation of a continental customs union, the creation of a single African common market, and to the ultimate establishment of a quasi-economic and political union, with a single currency, a central bank and an African parliament. The AEC Treaty in these respects seems to share and replicate at least two of the weaknesses of previous integration efforts in Africa identified in the first part of the book. The Treaty is as guilty as its predecessors of prescribing classical 'Euro-centric' models of integration which may not work in African conditions, and of 'putting the cart before the horse' by placing the accent on trade liberalisation. It is also striking to students of trade law and regional integration that there is little or no discussion of the challenge to new regionalism in Africa arising from the establishment of the World Trade

Organisation and the reshaping of the multilateral trading system at the end of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations in 1994. But these weaknesses notwithstanding, this is a highly commendable book.

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Nigerian Foreign Policy Towards Africa: continuity and change by AKIBA OKON
New York: Peter Lang, 1998. Pp. 230. $26 (pbk.).

This study attempts to explain Nigeria's foreign policy towards Africa with particular reference to three key issues, namely, regional economic co-operation, conflict management and Southern African liberation. In specific terms the work argues that despite changes in regime-types Nigeria's foreign policy towards Africa has revealed more elements of continuity than change. The transformations in the resource base of Nigeria, especially the impact of oil revenue, have not had any dramatic impact in terms of changing the content and direction of Nigeria's foreign policy away from maintaining the status-quo ante. Instead, the main currents of foreign policy have been in the direction of maintaining the political and economic status quo at both domestic and international levels. Whatever elements of 'change' that seem to emerge are merely cosmetic and superficial and do not in any fundamental way change the main underlying currents of Nigeria's foreign policy.

At the theoretical level the work utilises the argument that the structure of Nigeria's political economy to a large extent determines the direction and content of political and economic policies both domestic and foreign. Judging from the fact that a large number of works on Nigerian foreign policy utilise the socio-psychological, 'linkage' and capability frameworks of analysis, it is quite interesting that Okon Akiba's work attempts to demonstrate the utility of the political economy approach to the study of Nigeria's foreign policy.

Assessing Nigeria's foreign policy towards Africa in the immediate post-independence era, the author quite clearly and succinctly makes the point that the country adopted a cautious and instrumentalist position on African affairs in contrast to radical positions adopted by Nkrumah's Ghana and the Casablanca group. In essence, the pro-West foreign policy of Nigeria had the effect of tempering its positions in Africa in the direction of maintaining the status quo even though the same pro-West positions conflicted with its avowed claims to neutrality and non-alignment. It is no wonder that Nigeria opposed African continental unity as proposed by the Casablanca group in favour of a moderate OAU structure in which the sovereignty and independence of member states was guaranteed. In addition, the conservative foreign policy positions of the Belewa administration ran counter to those of the informed and articulate pressure groups such as the trade unions and student bodies on several crucial issues such as the Anglo-Nigeria defence pact, continental unity and relations with countries of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

On regional integration, Nigeria's objective is to function as 'the industrial heart of an African Common Market' by stimulating economic and industrial

growth in the country. Adopting the twin policies of indigenisation and attraction of foreign investment, the Balewa administration hoped to provide a sound basis for industrialisation of the Nigerian economy, and, by extension, integration of West African and later African economies. Although initial integration efforts in West Africa under Belawa did not yield significant results, the subsequent military administrations gave integration the necessary boost through joint ventures between Nigeria and several West African nations. Despite opposition from France and some French-speaking West African states, General Gowon's diplomatic initiatives yielded fruit first by a draft treaty between Nigeria and Togo which subsequently led to the formation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Subsequent Nigerian governments have displayed different levels of commitment to ECOWAS – the least being General Buhari's administration under which about 700,000 illegal immigrants were expelled from Nigeria.

Nigeria's foreign policy towards the management of Africa's conflicts equally exhibits the features of pro-Westernness and maintenance of the status quo. With the exception of Angola where General Murtala Muhammad's administration sided with the pro-Moscow MPLA government, most other interventions in Africa's conflicts have demonstrated Nigeria's preference for pro-Western factions. In the Congo, it supported the Kasavubu faction which was opposed to the Lumumba government which had the tacit backing of the communist nations of Eastern Europe. On the Western Sahara it refused recognition to the Polisario Front fighting for the independence of the 'Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic' from Morocco. Again during the Shaba I and II invasions of Zaire which threatened stability of Mobutu's regime, it supported Western military intervention and did not prevent the seizure of power by the pro-Western Hissein Habre forces during the Chadian conflict even though it formed part of the peacekeeping force. The Angolan situation where Nigeria supported pro-Soviet forces is explained by the fact that South African support for Biafran secessionist rebels during Nigeria's civil war decidedly influenced the Murtala Muhammad administration in supporting the MPLA forces in Angola.

Since independence Nigerian governments have publicly declared their opposition to racial discrimination and apartheid, and have been willing to employ whatever means feasible to eradicate these ills, ranging from political and economic sanctions to offering moral and material support to the liberation movements in the region. Although military regimes in Nigeria have demonstrated more commitment to eradicate minority rule and apartheid than civilian administrations, the 'activist' phase of Nigeria's Southern Africa policy was support for the MPLA government in Angola. In the specific case of Zimbabwe, Nigeria's policy was guided by the need to maintain the continental status quo by allowing moderate leaders such as Nkomo to emerge. Coming soon after the 'radicalisation' of ZANU along Marxist lines, Nigeria backed the proposed Smith–Nkomo alliance so that a moderate African government would be in control after independsence.

Okon Akiba's work initially raises the reader's hopes because it promises to be different from previous studies of Nigeria's foreign policy which have, in the main, utilised the socio-psychological, linkage and capability frameworks of

analysis. A work utilising the political economy approach to study Nigeria's foreign policy should have detailed the interests of the ruling class, its linkages to foreign capital and how these have influenced foreign policy. Instead, what is found in the work are patches of the political economy approach, the most pronounced being the third chapter. The linkage approach is more prominent in the second chapter while the capability approach has been utilised in the fifth chapter where oil as a major factor in Nigeria's Southern Africa policy is discussed. In the end the so-called political economy approach does not run through the entire work; rather a multiplicity of approaches have been adopted in the analysis of Nigeria's foreign policy towards Africa. Second, a work on Nigeria's foreign policy which emerged in 1998 should have taken cognizance of significant changes that have taken place in Nigeria's foreign policy since 1989. For instance, Nigeria is beginning to intervene in many conflicts in Africa and regional integration in West Africa is undergoing a transformation with the Nigerian-led ECOMOG operations in Liberia. What implications do these developments have for a post-Cold War Nigerian foreign policy? A future edition of the work needs to bring to the fore contemporary issues in Nigeria's foreign policy.

These few comments apart, the work is recommended to scholars and practitioners of Nigeria's foreign policy, especially those dealing with the development of Nigeria's foreign policy since independence as its relates to the African continent.

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The Birth of a New South Africa by T. R. H. Davenport
Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 1998. Pp. 143. £19.50, £12.75 (pbk.).

This book is a revised version of lectures which Rodney Davenport gave at the University of Western Ontario in September 1995 – the Joanna Goodman Lectures. In delivering the lectures Davenport faced a number of challenges. First, he was dealing with very recent events, whereas, as an historian, he recognises that he feels more at home 'with events that have been allowed to settle down over time' (p. xi). Second, he has to convey to a Canadian audience the complexity and uncertainty of the South African situation. He has to explain not only the South African 'miracle' – the remarkable achievement of negotiating away apartheid and agreeing a democratic constitution – but the human face and human frailties behind it. The 'new' South Africa is not only an extraordinary achievement, it is also, argues Davenport, a flawed society. He points out that it 'remains one of the most violent and corrupt countries in the world', with 'deep rifts of incomprehension between our many communities' (p. xi).

Overall Davenport succeeds admirably in this taks. He has produced a short, clear overview of the shaping of the new South Africa. The book has four chapters. The first three: 'Breaking Through', 'Peace Making' and 'Constitution Making', are based directly on the lectures; while the fourth,

'The Growing Pains of Democracy', has been added for the book. He starts with an account of the events following F. W. de Klerk's famous speech of 2 February 1990, when he opened the doors to a negotiated settlement by unbanning the liberation movements and releasing political prisoners – including Nelson Mandela. Tracing what follows, Davenport successfully examines the process of constitution making, and clearly outlines the positions take by the major parties. Even so, the Canadian audience must have been taxed in trying to follow all the complexities. However, that is partly ameliorated by Davenport's recognition of the role of individuals. He rightly picks out de Klerk and Mandela as the central figures. Mandela, says Davenport, emerged from twenty-seven years imprisonment with 'his leadership qualities unimpaired, his anger under control, and his integrity intact' (p. 41). De Klerk is seen as a 'clever politician', who had been in the mainstream of the ruling National Party, and believed that apartheid had been a good try, but who had the clarity of view to know that a new start had to be made. While they were the main characters, other parts were played by such diverse people as Chief Buthelezi, Eugene Terre Blanche (the white extremist), Lucas Mangope (the president of a discredited apartheid 'homeland') and Joe Slovo, of the South African Communist Party. Their diversity points up the task which now faces the new state, and that task is ocmpounded by deep seated violence – both political and criminal – which has plagued the society, and continues to plague it today. During the negotiations the violence was many headed – including clashes between Inkatha and the ANC, attacks by 'right-wing' whites, and the activities of a covert government 'Third Force'. An average of about 3,000 people a year were killed in political violence during the negotiations. It was, as Davenport says: 'A chicken and egg situation; the suppression of violence required strong government but there could not be strong government until the parties agreed where legitimate authority was to be located' (p. 29).

In more recent times, the society is trying to come to terms with its violent past through the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The TRC's work is controversial, but Davenport ends on a note of hope. If, he writes, its final report 'penetrates deeply enough into the social values of the various cultures that give quality to South African Life, [it] could provide the focal point for real reconstruction' (p. 105).

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